

# Re-reading Max Weber's "Collected Essays on the Sociology of Religion" : Georg Jellinek and Max Weber

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## Abstract

The conventional approach has been to read the essays of "The Economic Ethic of the World Religions" from the standpoint of a prior reading of "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism". As a result, these articles have been considered as circumstantial evidence for "the Protestant Ethic thesis".

However, if we try to read the "Protestant Ethic" from the standpoint of these articles that studied the Orient critically, then we find a serious omission in the "Protestant Ethic", that is, no reference to the political domain.

Judging from a note to the first edition of the "Protestant Ethic" (1904), the "missing" political focus must be found in Georg Jellinek's 1895 study, "The Declaration of the Right of Man and of Citizens."

If we read Jellinek's and Weber's studies of Protestantism together, we can discern the influences of Protestantism on the formation of civil society from the two sides of economy and politics. And we can properly compare them with the articles of "The Economic Ethic" for the first time.

From the comparison we conclude that these papers can be read not only as a criticism of Oriental patrimonialism, but in addition, Weber developed a critique of the German Empire and investigated the possibility of the creation of real civil society in Germany.

Key words: Jellinek, patrimonialism, civil society

## 1. The purpose of this paper

The purpose of this paper is to re-read Max Weber's "Collected Essays on the Sociology of Religion" from the relation to Georg Jellinek.

## 2. The missing focus on politics

### 2. 1 The contents of "Collected Essays"

The "Collected Essays on the Sociology of Religion" is regarded as one of the major works of Max Weber. It contains

Book I (1920) <sup>1)</sup>	(publication year)
Author's Introduction (1920)	
The Protestant Ethic and the Sprit of Capitalism (first edition 1905 / revised edition 1920)	
The Protestant Sects and the Sprit of Capitalism	

(1920)

The Economic Ethic of the World Religions

Introduction (first edition 1916 / revised edition 1920)

Confucianism and Taoism (first edition 1916 / revised edition 1920)

Intermediate Reflections (first edition 1916 / revised edition 1920)

Book II (1921)<sup>2)</sup>

Hinduism and Buddhism (first edition 1916-7)

Book III (1921)<sup>3)</sup>

Ancient Judaism (first edition 1917-9)

The Pharisees (posthumous manuscript)<sup>4)</sup>

### 2. 2 The conventional approach

The conventional approach has been to read the essays

of "The Economic Ethic of World Religions" from the standpoint of a prior reading of "The Protestant Ethic and the Sprit of Capitalism". As a result, their articles have been considered as circumstantial evidence for "the Protestant Ethic thesis".

### 2. 3 Reading from papers on Asia

However, if we try to read the "Protestant Ethic" from the standpoint of these articles that studied the Orient critically, then we find a serious omission in the "Protestant Ethic", that is, no reference to the political domain. While the articles on the Orient deal with the total societies that contained political domain, "Protestant Ethic" deals concretely only with the relation of economics and Religion. Furthermore there is no article that described the relation of Protestantism and politics in "Collected Essays".

### 2. 4 The missing political focus

But in 'Church and Sect in North America' (1906) he did refer the influence of Protestant sects to the American democracy. He omitted the reference to political domain when he revised this essay to "The Protestant Sects and the Sprit of Capitalism."<sup>5)</sup> Therefore this elimination is intentional one.

### 2. 5 A reference to Anabaptist in "Sociology of Law"

Weber also referred to the relation of Protestant sects and the Ideas of Human Rights in "Sociology of Law".<sup>6)</sup> But he did not continue this abrupt reference.

This hesitation to a further reference makes us suppose that there must be a prior study on the relation of Protestantism and political domain, especially, the influence of Protestant sects to the idea of Human Right.

### 2. 6 The prior study

As Roth (1971) and Ando (1979) already pointed out, Weber had himself referred the prior study in the note of the first edition of "Protestant Ethic and the Sprit of Capitalism" (1905). He wrote,

"As it is well known, it is 'the Declaration of the Rights of Man' of Jellinek that have fundamental meaning for the history of the birth of 'freedom of conscience' and its political meaning. I am personally indebted to this book for encouragement to study about Puritanism newly."<sup>7)</sup>

### 2. 7 Jellinek's work

In his article, "the Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens" (1895) Georg Jellinek (1851-1911) showed that (1) it is "Bill of Rights" of American states after 1776 that became a direct example of "Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens" (1789) of French and (2) "Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens" has the historical source in the struggle for freedom of religion.

### 2. 8 Toward a new reading

If we read Jellinek's and Weber's studies of Protestantism together, we can discern the influences of Protestantism on the formation of civil society from the both sides of economy and politics.

And when we read the both articles together, then we can properly compare them with the articles of "The Economic Ethic of Sociology of Religion." At the same time we can compare these articles with Weber's other papers, especially, political articles.

I want to give only some viewpoints to read "the Collected Essays" again as follows. (As a result, the following consideration is fragmentary).

## 3. Comparison from a new point of view

### 3. 1 "Iron Cage"

#### 3. 11 Chinese petrification

At the end of the first edition of "Protestant Ethic" Weber wrote, "No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or, if neither 'Chinese' petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance."<sup>8)</sup>

In the revision (1920) Weber changed the word, "Chinese petrification" ("chinesische" Versteinerung) to "mechanized petrification" (mechanisierte Versteinerung).<sup>9)</sup>

What did "Chinese petrification" mean? This quotation shows that the "Chinese petrification" happens when "cage" (Gehäuse) is not broken down.

#### 3. 12 Iron cage of bureaucracy

In "Parliament and Government in Germany under a New Political Order" (1918) Weber said that it is "living machine" (bureaucracy) that form "Gehäuse" (cage) mainly.<sup>10)</sup>

And Weber thought that the fossilization of society by a bureaucratisation brings about extinction of its whole

culture.<sup>11)</sup> The “Chinese petrification” is “the fossilization of society by bureaucracy.”

### 3. 13 “Confucianism”

After “Protestant Ethic” Weber wrote “Confucianism” (the first version of “Confucianism and Taoism”). Actually, this article is a thorough criticism of Confucianism that is the spirit of a patrimonial bureaucracy. Of course, patrimonial bureaucracy is not modern bureaucracy. But when this article was announced in 1916, Germany was a kind of patrimonial state, the German Empire. This article criticized the spirit of bureaucracy thoroughly for the future of Germany nation.

## 3. 2 Political education

### 3. 21 Leading spirit

What is opposed to the spirit of bureaucracy? Weber wrote that it is “leading spirit” that is opposed to the spirit of bureaucracy. And the “entrepreneur” and the “politician” embody it.<sup>12)</sup>

Where did “the leading spirit” of bourgeois “politician” and “entrepreneur” come from?

After reading Jellinek’s “Declaring of Human Right” and Weber’s “Protestant Ethic” together, We understand that their leading spirits came from Protestantism.

### 3. 22 Meaning of the order of paper: Development to the leading spirit

In the “Introduction” of “Economic Ethic” Weber wrote that there was an internal reason in the order of the papers.<sup>13)</sup> But he did not write the “internal reason” concretely. So we will try to review the order of the article once again.

Confucianism: Spirit of world adaptation

India religions: Spirit escaping from world

Spirit of prophet of ancient Judaism: Spirit of world mastery

Then meaning of order of these articles grows in this way;

“Do not adapt itself to this world. Criticize this world strictly. But do not escape from this world. Lead this world!”

The “Collected Essay” has constitution to investigate the state of spirit leading the world. It is a document of a kind of political education. Weber thought that the political education was necessary for German nation<sup>14)</sup>

## 3. 3 The developing of Bourgeoisie

### 3. 31 Feudalism vs. Patrimonialism

In his work on Asia Weber set feudalism against patrimonialism. Free cities are formed under feudalism. The free cities were rich hotbeds of thoughts and religions. But the city became a seat of a monarch under patrimonialism. Active spirits perish and the society becomes stiff. The formation of the free city and citizen was the vital point for the development of the Western culture. The announcement of “Collected Essays” shows that it would be “expanded --- especially by a sketch devoted to the rise of social singularity of the Occident, i.e., an essay on the development of the European bourgeoisie in the antiquity and the Middle Ages.”<sup>15)</sup>

### 3. 32 Commensality in Antioch

“The development of the European bourgeoisie” are also referred in “Hinduism and Buddhism” as “Commensality in Antioch”. Weber said, it was “the hour of conception for the occidental ‘citizenry’”. This is the case even though its birth occurred more than a thousand years later in the revolutionary conjurations of the medieval cities.”<sup>16)</sup>

In his thought, without Christianity there was no development of the western citizen. And the advent of the bourgeoisie who held leadership in politics and economy was essential for the Western society development.

### 3. 33 Political immaturity of the bourgeoisie in Germany

How was the bourgeoisie in German? In his inaugural lecture Weber criticized that German bourgeoisie had no maturity to lead the nation state of German.<sup>17)</sup>

How do they make the German bourgeoisie mature politically? The first answer was “Protestant Ethic”. Cooperating with Jellinek’s work, this article described development of the bourgeois who could revolutionize and lead the society. At the same time he urged German bourgeois to maintain ethic and to display political leadership.

## 3. 4 Leading the nation

### 3. 41 The crisis of German nation-state

German state entered World War I in 1914. It became the fight that the life and death of Germany nation was bet on. As a nationalist<sup>18)</sup> he thought that the leading spirit should command the nation-state in crisis.

### 3. 42 "Ancient Judaism"

His "Ancient Judaism" was written in such a crisis of the nation.

This article described : the fall of the kingdom and the continuation of the nation, the activity of the intellectual : the grass-roots intellectual (Levites), and the intellectual criticizing monarchy and the political Demagogue (Prophet). Needless to say, this reminds us of activity of Weber as a journalist in the war. He sought for a state of spirit leading nation in the figure of prophet.

### 3. 43 Sociology for Max Weber

In "the business report" (Geschaeftbericht) of the Germany Sociology Society in 1910 Weber picked up three themes that Society should work on. That is Sociology of "association", "elite" and "news-paper" (GAzSuS S434-48).

The Society did not develop this sociology. But as a matter of fact Weber himself developed this sociology in his sociology of religion. He studied religious associations and dealt with intellectual elite of China, India and Judaism. In "Ancient Judaism" he dealt with prophet as pamphleteer (a newspaper person) and the problem of the public opinion that integrate the nation. The activity of elite intellectual and pamphleteer maintain the nation in spite of fall of the kingdom. In his thought it is a religious association that becomes a core of bourgeois revolution.

The sociology for Weber was a science for making a civil society in a frame of nation-state.

### 3. 5 Taking the label off

The label of "sociology of rationalization" is often affixed to "the Collected Essays of Sociology of Religion." This empty label lets people search for a description of rationalization in this essays in vain. Therefore they collect pieces of words and develop a boring typology of rationality. As a result, all the concrete descriptions of these essays are thrown away.<sup>19)</sup>

Let us be free from this label once. Then we notice that he did not say that he would develop sociology of rationalization. In "Author's Introduction" he asked how Western cultural phenomena appeared (Weber 1976, p.13). He considered that West cultural phenomena had been brought as a result of development of the West bourgeoisie. Because the bourgeoisie of the free cities

was formed only in the West.

### 4. Conclusion: the central theme in "the Collected Essays"

We conclude by re-reading "The Collected Essays of Sociology of Religion" from relation with Jellinek as follows:

Weber had not so much interest in studying about the historical confirmation of the birth of capitalism. Rather he had interested in how they make the German state ruled by bureaucracy into a nation-state by political mature citizen. For that purpose he studied China and India. He tried to criticize Germany bureaucracy and an intellectual of those days. With studying the ancient Judaism further, he examined how to make the nation state that endured a crisis of collapse. What he discovered in the study and practiced actually was a creation of the public opinion for nation unification.

I wanted to only suggest a possibility of re-reading of "the Collected Essays of Sociology of Religion"

### References

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  - 2) Weber M.: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie, II* J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 1921.
  - 3) Weber M.: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie, III* J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 1921.
  - 4) "The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism" is the revised edition of 'Church and Sect in North America' carried in the "Christian World" (Vol. 20 No. 24-5. 1906). "The Pharisees" was the posthumous manuscript. The first editions of the other papers were carried in "Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik." While Weber published the Book I himself in 1920, the book II and III were published by his wife, Marianne Weber 1921.
- The title of the first edition of "Confucianism and Taoism" was 'Confucianism'. Professor Ando Eiji had investigated the revision of "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism", 'Church and Sect in North America', and 'Confucianism' in detail.
- (Eiji.A.: Max Weber. "Church" and "Sect" in North America, (translation). In : "Collection of Articles on Politic and Economy" (the Seijou University). Vol.14. no.1. 1966. Eiji.A.: About Revision of Sociology of Religion by Max Weber. In : "Collection of Articles on

- Politic and Economy" (the Seijou University). Vol.18. no.3-4. 1969. Eiji.A.: About Revision of Sociology of Religion by Max Weber (2). In : "Collection of Articles on Politic and Economy" (the Seijou University). Vol.)
- 5) Prof. Ando had pointed out this omission in his translation of 'Church and Sect in North America' (Eiji.A.: Max Weber. "Church" and "Sect" in North America, (translation). In : "Collection of Articles on Politic and Economy" (the Seijou University). Vol. 14. no.1. 1966.).
- 6) "But the transition to the conception that every human being as such has certain right was mainly completed through the rationalistic Enlightenment of the seven-teenth and eighteenth centuries with the aid, at certain periods, of powerful religious, particularly Anabaptist, influences" (Weber M.: The Protestant Ethic and the Sprit of Capitalism, transl. by Persons T. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York,88-68,1978.).
- 7) Archive für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik, 20Bd. S.43
- 8) Archive für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik 21Bd. S.109
- 9) Weber M.: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie, I, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, S204 1920.
- 10) "A lifeless machine is congealed spirit. It is only this fact that gives the machine the power to force men to serve it and thus to rule and determine their daily working lives, as in fact happens in factories. This same congealed spirit is, however, also embodied in that living machine which represented by bureaucratic organisation with its specialisation of trained, technical work, its delimitation of areas of responsibility, its regulations and its graduated hierarchy of relations of obedience. Combined with the dead machine, it is in the process of manufacturing the housing [Gehäuse] of that future serfdom to which, perhaps, men may have to submit powerlessly, just like the selves in the ancient state of Egypt..." (Weber M.:Political Writing. edited by Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs. Cambridge University Press. 158. 1994.)
- 11) "The future belongs to bureaucratization... Bureaucracy is however, distinguished from other historical bearers of the modern, rational way of ordering life by the fact of its far greater inescapability. History records no instance of it having disappeared again once it had achieved complete and sole dominance — in China, Egypt, or, in a less consistent form in the later Roman Empire and Byzantium, except when the whole culture supporting it also disappeared completely." (Weber M.:Political Writing. edited by Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs. Cambridge University Press.156.1994.)
- 12) "(3) a third question, most important of all, which arises from any consideration of what is not performed by bureaucracy as such. It is clear that its effectiveness has strict internal limit, both in the management of public, political affairs and in the private economic sphere. The leading spirit, the 'entrepreneur' in the one case, the 'politician' in the other, is something different from an 'official'." (Weber M.:Political Writing. edited by Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs. Cambridge University Press.159.1994.)
- 13) Weber M.: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie, I, J.C.B.Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 267. 1920.
- 14) Weber M.:Political Writing. edited by Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs. Cambridge University Press. 27. 1994.
- 15) This announcement, written by Weber, appeared on October 25, 1919, in the "Neuigkeiten," a newsletter of the publishing houses J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) and H. Laupp. (Schluchter,W., Rationalism, Religion,, and Domination. Trans. By Neil Solomon. University of California Press.425.1989)
- 16) "Let us now consider the Occident. In his letter to the Gelatins (11:12,13ff.) Paul reproaches Peter for having eaten in Antioch with the gentiles and for having withdrawn and separated himself afterwards, under the influence of the Jerusalemites. 'And the other Jews dissembled likewise the him.' That the reproach of dissimulation made the very Apostle has not been effaced shows perhaps just as clearly as does the occurrence itself the tremendous importance this event had for the early Christians. Indeed, this shattering of the ritual barriers against commensalism meet a destruction of the voluntary ghetto. It meant to destroy the situation of Jewry as a pariah people, a situation that was ritually imposed upon this people. For the Christians it meant the origin of Christian 'freedom,' which Paul celebrated triumphantly again and again; for this freedom meant the universalism of Paul's mission, which cut across nation and status groups. The elimination of all ritual barriers for the community of the eucharists, as realized in Antioch,

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was, in connection with the religious pre-conditions, the hour of conception for the occidental 'citizenry'. This is the case even though its birth occurred more than a thousand years later in the revolutionary conjurations of the medieval cities. For without communalism - in Christian terms, without the Lord's Supper - no oath bound fraternity and no medieval urban citizenry would have been possible." (Weber M.: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie II*, J.C.B.Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 39-40. 1921.)

- 17) "I am a member of the bourgeois (bürgerlich) classes. I feel myself to be a bourgeois, and I have been brought up to share their views and ideals.... I ask myself whether the German bourgeoisie has the maturity today to be the leading political class of the nation, I cannot answer this question in the affirmative

today. The bourgeoisie did not create the German state by its own efforts, and when it had been created, there stood at the head of the nation that Caesarist figure [Bismarck] made of distinctly unbourgeois stuff." (Weber M.: *Political Writing*, edited by Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs. Cambridge University Press, 23.1994.)

- 18) In his inaugural lecture Weber also said, "What makes us feel we have a right to make this demand is the circumstance that our state is a nation state [Nationalstaat]." (Weber M.: *Political Writing*, edited by Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs. Cambridge University Press, 13.1994.)
- 19) The only one exception is Kalberg, S.: Max Weber's Types of Rationality. In: *AJS* vol.85, no.5, 1980.

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## マックス・ヴェーバー『宗教社会学論集』再読

— イエリネックとヴェーバー —

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## 要 約

ヴェーバーの『宗教社会学論集』のなかの「世界宗教の経済倫理」の諸論文はこれまで「プロテスタンティズムの倫理と資本主義の精神」を前提にして読まれてきた。その結果、プロテスタンティズム論文のテーゼの状況証拠の論文集と見なされてきた。しかし両者をよく読むと、「プロテスタンティズムの倫理と資本主義の精神」の方には政治領域への言及の欠如があることがわかる。初版の注からその欠如を埋めるのがイエリネックの『人権宣言論』であると推測される。「プロテスタンティズムの倫理と資本主義の精神」と『人権宣言論』の両者をセットにして読むとはじめて、プロテスタンティズムの政治経済双方への影響が見えてくる。と同時に、『宗教社会学論集』が東洋的家産制批判であるばかりか、ドイツ帝国の批判であり、真の市民社会創造の可能性を探った論文であることが了解されるのである。

キーワード：イエリネック、家産制、市民社会